

*Anthony Copeland*  
MAYOR



*City of East Chicago*  
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June 16, 2014

Steven P. Kaiser  
Office of Regional Counsel  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
77 West Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

RE: Proposed Demolitions within USS Lead Superfund Site

Dear Attorney Kaiser:

This letter is in response to concerns regarding potential environmental liability which may arise should the City of East Chicago proceed with its plans to demolish properties within the USS Lead Superfund site. The buildings which have been targeted for demolition in the short term are severely dilapidated and pose an immediate danger to the life and health of residents. These dangers include the imminent risk of partial or total building collapse, in addition to fire dangers and other risks posed by buildings that literally threaten to fall down at any moment. The City has been delayed in its plans to address such dangers and blight in this area by the environmental problems in the Calumet neighborhood, but feels that the immediate risk to life and health is so great that we cannot further delay demolition plans. As a result, we have identified revenue sources and advertised for contractors to bid for this demolition work, which is to be performed strictly according to procedures approved by the EPA's Superfund division. If we fail to proceed in this construction season, valuable revenue sources may be lost.

The risk of imminent danger of injury or death to residents or passersby posed by delaying the demolition of these buildings in the short term must be balanced with the potential risk of environmental liability should the City proceed as planned with our demolition plans. By this letter, I am requesting that you inform the City of East Chicago, in writing, how to balance these risks, and whether the risk of imminent injury is outweighed by the potential risk of Arco, DuPont, or other polluters of this superfund site coming after the City as an operator of the site. We ask that your office assist the City with drafting a plan which balances these risks. In the alternative, will the EPA remove the imminent danger posed by these dilapidated buildings under its powers in the short term, and then ask for reimbursement of its demolition costs?

We appreciate your concern, as well as the involvement of Remedial Project Manager Michael Berkoff and his team as we work toward solutions in this area. Thank you in advance for your written response to the question of how to balance the risk of demolition vs. environmental liability in this area, as well as how and when to proceed with the proposed demolitions within the USS Lead Superfund site.

Sincerely,

Anthony Copeland  
Mayor